

Press Release

14th June 2019

Consultation begins on Regional Trauma Network

A consultation process on newly enhanced trauma services for Northern Ireland (NI) has been launched today (14th June 2019) by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB).

An estimated 61% of adults living in Northern Ireland have experienced a traumatic event at some point in their lifetime and around 39% have experienced a Conflict/Troubles-related traumatic event.

The consultation document is entitled: '*Regional Trauma Network: Service Delivery Model and Equality Impact Assessment*' can be viewed at www.hscboard.hscni.net/get-involved/consultations. The HSCB is encouraging victims and survivors of the Troubles/Conflict and anyone impacted by trauma to take the opportunity to provide their views on the proposals.

The proposals, which are a commitment made as part of the Stormont House Agreement, will enhance the existing provision of mental health services for children, young people and adults in NI.

Following collaborative partnership working and an extensive engagement process, the HSCB proposes to improve access to the highest quality trauma services by creating a specialised local trauma team in each of the five HSC Trusts. These teams will work closely with other statutory HSC services and the community and voluntary sector to deliver nationally and internationally recommended evidence-based trauma treatments across the region. The new services will be introduced in a phased approach:

- Phase 1: introduce a new pathway to trauma services for victims and survivors of the Conflict/Troubles; and also design a pathway for children and young people for improved access to treatment for individuals with significant psychological trauma symptoms who experience barriers to seeking help.
- Phase 2: full implementation of newly enhanced trauma services for all children, young people, and adults with significant levels of psychological trauma, irrespective of the origin of their trauma difficulties; and
- Phase 3: develop and strengthen the service, pending learning from Phases 1 and 2.

Marie Roulston, Director of Social Care and Children with the HSCB said: "Along with all of our partners we are firmly committed to the vision set out in the Stormont House Agreement to establish a comprehensive Mental Health Trauma Service in Northern Ireland.

"To date, work to design and develop the Regional Trauma Network has been informed by learning from and collaboration with those affected by trauma, carers, HSC Trusts, the Victims and Survivors' Service

and the wider community and voluntary sector. These partnerships will increase and share our learning about delivering the best psychological trauma treatment and care to those who need it.

“During the consultation period, the HSCB will seek the views of individuals and families affected by trauma, and I want to reassure everyone that we will carefully consider their views which will guide our approach and help us to make better decisions for the future”.

Welcoming the consultation, Judith Thompson, The Commissioner for Victims and Survivors (NI) commented, “The initiation of this consultation process represents a significant development in progressing the establishment of the new Regional Trauma Network.”

“Creating a new service operating on a partnership basis between the health and social care service and community organisations will provide a timely, effective and accessible specialist service for victims and survivors whose mental health has been blighted by their experience of the Troubles/Conflict.”

“This consultation is an important opportunity for victims and survivors and wider stakeholders to express their views on the continued development and future operation of this vitally important and long awaited service. I would encourage everyone to respond to the consultation and look forward to the Regional Trauma Network being established as quickly as possible.”

You can respond to the consultation in a number of ways:

- Fill in the form inside the consultation document, detach it, and post it back to us.
- Fill in the online form available on: <http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/get-involved/consultations>
- Download a MSWord or PDF version of the questionnaire from www.hscboard.hscni.net/get-involved/consultations/ complete it and email or post it back to us.
- Contact us and we will send you out a hard copy of the questionnaire.
- Email or write to us with your comments.

Responses or requests for further information or alternative formats should be emailed to regionaltraumanetwork@hscni.net or in writing to Geraldine Hamilton, Regional Trauma Network Manager, Health and Social Care Board, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS or telephone 028 9536 3304.

However you choose to give us your views, we want to hear from you on or before **1.00pm on Friday 6th September 2019.**

-Ends-

For further information or out of hours enquiries contact the Health and Social Care Board Communications Office on 028 9536 3278.

Notes to Editors:

- As part of the Stormont House Agreement, the Northern Ireland Executive made the following commitment to establish a comprehensive Mental Health Trauma Service:

The Commission for Victims and Survivors’ recommendation for a comprehensive Mental Trauma Service will be implemented. This will operate within the NHS but will work closely with the

Victims and Survivors' Service (VSS), and other organisations and groups who work directly with victims and survivors. (Paragraph 27)

- Research has shown that an estimated 61% of the Northern Ireland adult population have experienced a traumatic event at some point in their lifetime and an estimated 39% of the population have experienced a Conflict/Troubles-related traumatic event. (Commission for Victims and Survivors, 2011).
- The Regional Trauma Network involves the design, co-production, and implementation of an integrated service model including statutory, voluntary, and community sector services to respond to the needs of children, young people, and adults with trauma-related psychological difficulties.
- An estimated 8.8% of the Northern Ireland adult population met the criteria for PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) at some point in their life while 5.1% met the criteria in the previous 12 months.
- The prevalence of PTSD in Northern Ireland is the highest of all countries that have produced comparable estimates including the USA, other Western European countries and countries that have experienced civil conflict in their recent history. (2011)